



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

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TEXAS SYNDICATE MEMBERS SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that today 10 Texas Syndicate (TS) members were sentenced to federal prison for racketeering and drug offenses.

United States District Judge Sam Sparks sentenced:

JOSE LOUIS RIVERA (aka Big Joe) to life imprisonment;
ERNEST ANDRADE ZUBIATE (aka Neto) to life imprisonment;
MAGADALENO MEDINA (aka Junior) to 480 months imprisonment;
MICHAEL ANTHONY SANCHEZ (aka 50-50) to 400 months imprisonment;
ROBERT CRISOSTOMO (aka "Bam Bam) to 420 months imprisonment;
DANIEL DELEON MATA (aka Daniel Mata-Deleon) to 360 months imprisonment;
PAUL RUIZ (aka Veneno) to 360 months imprisonment;
GUADALUPE SALAS (aka Pepo) to 360 months imprisonment;
CLETO SAMUEL DURAN (aka Boy) to 360 months imprisonment; and,
RAMON FLORES (aka Capone) to 240 months imprisonment.

"Today's sentencings are a fitting end to the criminal careers of these violent individuals. These men were members of the Texas Syndicate, an extremely dangerous prison gang that deals in drugs, intimidation and violence. The fact that these and many other Texas Syndicate members have been convicted and put away makes Austin and the surrounding areas safer places to live," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton. Sutton noted that to date, prosecutors from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas have convicted over 50 members of the Texas Syndicate of serious federal crimes.

Beginning at 9:00am tomorrow, Judge Sparks will sentence the remaining defendants in this case including:

REYNADOZ PANIAGUA (aka Ray Ray or Little Ray)
AMADO AGUILAR SORRIANO (aka Maui)
ROBERT VELEZ (aka Joker)
RANDY SALAZAR
ARMANDO ESTRADA (aka Shorty Two Forty)
VICTOR BARRERA MORONES (aka Coco)
ARMANDO NAVA (aka Mando);
JOSE LEONARDO POSADA; and,
DAVID REYNA (aka Chato).

— more —

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All 19 were indicted by a federal grand jury in May 2003 charged with violating the Racketeering Influence Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) and conspiring together to distribute cocaine. From January 1998 to May 2003, the defendants conspired to commit four murders and distribute well over two hundred kilograms of cocaine per year in the Austin area.

This case resulted from a five-year-long investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Austin Police Department with assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Secret Service, Texas Board of Criminal Justice–Office of Inspector General, Travis County Sheriff’s Office and the Texas Department of Public Safety. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Liz Cottingham and Ron Sievert and Special Assistant United States Attorney Gregg Cox of the Travis County District Attorney’s Office.

The Texas Syndicate, also known as “Syndicato Tejano” and “ESE TE,” originated during the 1970's.

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